

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A disk drive backplane for interfacing with a plurality of disk drive carrier types, the backplane comprising:

5 a connector for interfacing with a corresponding connector on each of the carrier types; and

a plurality of status indicator arrays, each of the arrays corresponding to at least one of the carrier types and being operable to transmit disk drive status information, each of the arrays being positioned to interface with a corresponding status interface on the at least one
10 corresponding carrier type.

2. The backplane of claim 1 further comprising circuitry for enabling one of the status indicator arrays thereby configuring the backplane to interface with a particular one of the carrier types.

15 3. The backplane of claim 2 wherein the enabling circuitry comprises selection circuitry operable to gate signals to the one of the status indicator arrays being enabled.

4. The backplane of claim 3 wherein the selection circuitry is operable to
20 employ at least one shorting jumper to effect gating of the signals.

5. The backplane of claim 3 wherein the selection circuitry comprises at least one switch to effect gating of the signals.

6. The backplane of claim 3 wherein the signals comprise any of an activity signal from the particular one of the carrier types, a power signal, a fault signal from the particular one of the carrier types, and a fault signal derived from an external source.

5 7. The backplane of claim 1 wherein the connector comprises a SCA-2 connector as defined by the ANSI T-10 Committee for SCSI interfaces

8. The backplane of claim 1 wherein each of the status indicator arrays comprises at least one light source operable to transmit the disk drive status information.

10 9. The backplane of claim 8 wherein the at least one light source represents any of a drive activity signal, a fault signal, and a power signal.

10. The backplane of claim 8 further comprising a light pipe adapter operable to
15 facilitate connection between one of the status indicator arrays and the status interface of the corresponding carrier type.

11. The backplane of claim 10 wherein the one of the status indicator arrays comprises a first number of light sources, the light pipe adapter being operable to facilitate
20 transmission of the disk drive status information from the first number of light sources to a second number of status indicators via the status interface of the corresponding carrier type.

12. The backplane of claim 11 wherein the first number is greater than the second number.

13. The backplane of claim 11 wherein the first number is fewer than the second number.

14. The backplane of claim 1 wherein at least one of the status indicator arrays
5 corresponds to more than one of the carrier types.

15. The backplane of claim 1 wherein the plurality of disk drive carrier types are provided by any of Newisys Inc., International Business Machines, Compaq Computers, Hewlett-Packard, and Dell Computers.

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16. The backplane of claim 1 wherein each of the status indicator arrays comprises at least one electrical contact operable to transmit the disk drive status information.

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17. The backplane of claim 16 wherein the at least one electrical contact represents any of a drive activity signal, a fault signal, and a power signal.

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18. A disk drive carrier chassis for use in a computer system, the disk drive carrier chassis being configured to receive each of a plurality of disk drive carrier cages, each of the disk drive carrier cages being configured to receive a corresponding one of a plurality of different disk drive carrier types.

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19. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 18 wherein the plurality of disk drive carrier types are provided by any of Newisys Inc., International Business Machines, Compaq Computers, Hewlett-Packard, and Dell Computers.

20. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 18 further comprising a carrier cage receptacle which is configured to receive each of the plurality of disk drive carrier cages.

5 21. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 20 further comprising a backplane affixed to the disk drive carrier chassis and comprising a first connector, wherein the carrier cage receptacle and the plurality of disk drive carrier cages are configured to facilitate connection between the first connector and a second connector on each of the disk drive carrier types.

10 22. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 21 wherein the backplane further comprises a plurality of status indicator arrays, each of the arrays corresponding to at least one of the carrier types and being operable to transmit disk drive status information, each of the arrays being positioned to interface with a corresponding status interface on the at least
15 one corresponding carrier type.

23. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 18 wherein the chassis is configured to receive more than one of the disk drive carrier cages simultaneously.

20 24. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 23 wherein the more than one of the disk drive carrier cages correspond to a single disk drive carrier type.

25 25. The disk drive carrier chassis of claim 23 wherein the more than one of the disk drive carrier cages correspond to multiple disk drive carrier types.

26. A computer system comprising a disk drive carrier chassis configured to receive each of a plurality of disk drive carrier cages, each of the disk drive carrier cages being configured to receive a corresponding one of a plurality of disk drive carrier types, the computer system further comprising a backplane coupled to the carrier chassis, the
5 backplane comprising:

a connector for interfacing with a corresponding connector on each of the carrier types; and

a plurality of status indicator arrays, each of the arrays corresponding to one of the carrier types and being operable to transmit disk drive status information, each of the arrays
10 being positioned to interface with a corresponding status interface on the corresponding carrier type.